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THREE WEEKS
AFTER MARRIAGE.

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THREE WEEKS AFTER MARRIAGE;

A COMEDY, IN TWO ACTS.—BY ARTHUR MURPHY.



Act II.—Scene 2.

CHARACTERS.

SIR CHARLES RACKET
DRUGGET
WOODLEY

LOVELACE
LADY RACKET
MRS. DRUGGET

NANCY
DIMITY
SERVANTS, &c.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A Room.

Enter WOODLEY and DIMITY.

Dim. Pho! Pho! no such thing. I tell you, Mr. Woodley, you are a mere novice in these affairs.

Wood. Nay, but listen to reason, Mrs. Dimity; has not your master, Mr. Drugget, invited me down to his country seat, in order to give me his daughter Nancy in marriage; and with what pretence can he now break off?

Dim. What pretence! you put a body out of all patience. But go on your own way, sir; my advice is all lost upon you.

Wood. You do me injustice, Mrs. Dimity; your advice has governed my whole conduct. Have not I fixed an interest in the young lady's heart?

Dim. An interest in a fiddlestick! you ought to have made love to the father and mother: what, do you think the way to get a wife, at this time of day, is by speaking fine things to the lady you have a fancy for? That was the practice, indeed; but things are alter'd now; you must address the old people, sir; and never trouble your head about your mistress. None of your letters, and verses, and soft looks, and fine speeches, "Have compassion, thou angelic creature, on a poor dying—" Psha! stuff! nonsense! all out of fashion: go your ways to the old curmudgeon; humour his whims. "I shall esteem it an honour, sir, to be allied to a gentleman of your rank and taste." "Upon my word, he's a pretty young gentleman." Then wheel about to the mother: "Your daughter, ma'am, is the very model of you, and I shall adore her for your sake." "Here, come hither, Nancy, take this gentleman for better or worse." "La, mamma, I can never consent." "I should not

have thought of your consent; the consent of your relations is enough: why, how now, hussy!" So away you go to church, the knot is tied, an agreeable honey-moon follows, the charm is then dissolved; you go to all the clubs in St. James's-street: your lady goes to the Coterie; and, in a little time you both go to Doctors Commons; and, if faults on both sides prevent a divorce, you'll quarrel like contrary elements all the rest of your lives: that's the way of the world now.

Wood. But you know, my dear Dimity, the old comple have received every mark of attention from me.

Dim. Attention! to be sure you did not fall asleep in their company; but what then? You should have entered into their characters, played with their humours, and sacrificed to their absurdities.

Wood. But if my temper is too frank—

Dim. Frank, indeed! yes, you have been frank enough to ruin yourself. Have you not to do with a rich old shopkeeper, retired from business with an hundred thousand pounds in his pocket, to enjoy the dust of the London road, which he calls living in the country; and yet you must find fault with his situation! What! if he has made a ridiculous gimcrack of his house and gardens, you know his heart is set upon it; and could not you commend his taste? But you must be too frank. "Those walks and alleys are too regular; those evergreens should not be cut into such fantastic shapes," and thus you advise a poor old mechanic, who delights in everything that's monstrous, to follow nature. Oh, you are likely to be a successful lover!

Wood. But why should I not save a father-in-law from being a laughing stock?

Dim. Make him your father-in-law first.

Wood. Why, he can't open his windows for the

dust; he stands all day looking through a pane of glass, at the carts and stage coaches as they pass by; and he calls that living in the fresh air, and enjoying his own thoughts.

Dim. And could not you let him go on his own way? You have ruin'd yourself by talking sense to him; and all your nonsense to the daughter won't make amends for it. And then the mother; how have you play'd your cards in that quarter? She wants a tinsel man of fashion for her second daughter. "Don't you see (says she) how happy my eldest girl is made by marrying Sir Charles Racket? She has been married three entire weeks, and not so much as one angry word has pass'd between them: Nancy shall have a man of quality too!"

Wood. And yet I know Sir Charles Racket perfectly well.

Dim. Yes, so do I; and I know he'll make his lady wretched at last. But what then? You should have humoured the old folks; you should have been a talking empty fop, to the good old lady; and to the old gentleman, an admirer of his taste in gardening. But you have lost him; he is grown fond of his beau Lovelace, who is here in the house with him: the coxcomb ingratiates himself by flattery, and you are undone by frankness.

Wood. And yet, Dimity, I won't despair.

Dim. And yet you have reason to despair; a million of reasons. To-morrow is fixed for the wedding-day; Sir Charles and his lady are to be here this very night; they are engaged indeed at a great rout in town, but they take a bed here, notwithstanding. The family is sitting up for them: Mr. Drugget will keep you all up in the next room there, till they arrive; and to-morrow the business is over; and yet you don't despair. Hush! hold your tongue; here comes Lovelace. Step in, and I'll advise something, I warrant you. [*Exit Woodley.*] The old folks shall not have their own way; 'tis enough to vex a body, to see an old father and mother marrying their daughter as they please, in spite of all I can do. [*Exit.*]

Enter DRUGGET and LOVELACE.

Drug. And so you like my house and gardens, Mr. Lovelace?

Love. Oh! perfectly, sir; they gratify my taste of all things. One sees villas where nature reigns in a wild kind of simplicity; but then they have no appearance of art; no art at all.

Drug. Very true, rightly distinguish'd; now mine is all art; no wild nature here; I did it myself.

Love. What! had you none of the great proficients in gardening to assist you?

Drug. Lack-a-day! no. Ha! ha! I understand these things: I love my garden. The front of my house, Mr. Lovelace, is not that very pretty?

Love. Elegant to a degree!

Drug. Don't you like the sun-dial, plac'd just by my dining-room windows?

Love. A perfect beauty!

Drug. I knew you'd like it; and the motto is so well adapted: *Tempus edax, and index rerum.* And I know the meaning of it: Time eateth and discovereth all things. Ha! ha! pretty, Mr. Lovelace! I have seen people so stare at it as they pass by—ha! ha!

Love. Why, now, I don't believe there's a nobleman in the kingdom has such a thing.

Drug. Oh no; they have got into a false taste. I bought that bit of ground the other side of the road; and it looks very pretty. I made a duck-pond there, for the sake of the prospect.

Love. Charming! I imagin'd!

Drug. My leaden images are well.

Love. They exceed ancient statuary.

Drug. I love to be surpris'd at the turning of a walk with an inanimate figure, that looks you full

in the face, and can say nothing to you, while one is enjoying one's own thoughts. Ha! ha! Mr. Lovelace, I'll point out a beauty to you. Just by the haw-haw, at the end of my ground, there is a fine Dutch figure, with a scythe in his hand, and a pipe in his mouth; that's a jewel, Mr. Lovelace.

Love. That escap'd me: a thousand thanks for pointing it out. I observe you have two very fine yew-trees before the house.

Drug. Lack-a-day, sir, they look uncouth; I have a design about them: I intend—ha! ha! it will be very pretty, Mr. Lovelace, I intend to have them cut into the shape of the two giants at Guild-hall—ha! ha!

Love. Nobody understands these things like you, Mr. Drugget.

Drug. Lack-a-day! it's all my delight now; this is what I have been working for. I have a great improvement to make still. I propose to have my evergreens cut into fortifications; and then I shall have the Moro Castle, and the Havanna; and then near it shall be ships of myrtle, sailing upon seas of box to attack the town: won't that make my place look very rural, Mr. Lovelace?

Love. Why, you have the most fertile invention, Mr. Drugget—

Drug. Ha! ha! this is what I have been working for. I love my garden; but I must beg your pardon for a few moments. I must step and speak with a famous nursery-man, who is come to offer me some choice things. Do go and join the company, Mr. Lovelace; my daughter Racket, and Sir Charles, will be here presently: I shan't go to bed till I see 'em; ha! ha! My place is prettily variegated; this is what I have been working for. I fined for sheriff to enjoy these things—ha! ha!

[*Exit.*]

Love. Poor Mr. Drugget! Mynheer Van Thundertentrunk, in his little box at the side of a dyke, has as much taste and elegance. However, if I can but carry off his daughter, if I can but rob his garden of that flower—why, I then shall say, "This is what I have been working for."

Enter DIMITY.

Dim. Do lend us your assistance, Mr. Lovelace; you're a sweet gentleman, and love a good natured action.

Love. Why how now! what's the matter?

Dim. My master is going to cut the two yew-trees into the shape of two devils, I believe; and my poor mistress is breaking her heart for it. Do, run and advise him against it; she is your friend, you know she is, sir.

Love. Oh, if that's all—I'll make that matter easy directly.

Dim. My mistress will be for ever oblig'd to you; and you'll marry her daughter in the morning.

Love. Oh, my rhetoric shall dissuade him.

Dim. And, sir, put him against dealing with that nurseryman; Mrs. Drugget hates him.

Love. Does she?

Dim. Mortally.

Love. Say no more, the business is done. [*Exit.*]

Dim. If he says one word, old Drugget will never forgive him. My brain was at its last shift; but if this plot takes—So, here comes our Nancy.

Enter NANCY.

Nancy. Well, Dimity, what's to become of me?

Dim. My stars! what makes you up, Miss? I thought you were gone to bed!

Nancy. What should I go to bed for? Only to tumble and toss, and fret, and be uneasy; they are going to marry me, and I am frightened out of my wits.

Dim. Why then, you're the only young lady within fifty miles round, that would be frightened at such a thing. [*myself.*]

Nancy. Ah! if they would let me choose for

Dim. Don't you like Mr. Lovelace?

Nancy. My mamma does, but I don't; I don't mind his being a man of fashion, not I.

Dim. And, pray, can you do better than follow the fashion?

Nancy. Ah! I know there's a fashion for new bonnets, and a fashion for dressing the hair; but I never heard of a fashion for the heart.

Dim. Why then, my dear, the heart mostly follows the fashion now.

Nancy. Does it? pray who sets the fashion of the heart?

Dim. All the fine ladies in London, o' my conscience.

Nancy. And what's the last new fashion, pray?

Dim. Why, to marry any fop that has a few deceitful agreeable appearances about him; something of a pert phrase, a good operator for the teeth, and a tolerable tailor.

Nancy. And do they marry without loving?

Dim. Oh! marrying for love has been a great while out of fashion.

Nancy. Why, then I'll wait till that fashion comes up again.

Dim. And then, Mr. Lovelace, I reckon—

Nancy. Psha! I don't like him: he talks to me as if he was the most miserable man in the world, and the confident thing looks so pleased with himself all the while. I want to marry for love, and not for card-playing. I should not be able to bear the life my sister leads with Sir Charles Racket; and I'll forfeit my new cap, if they don't quarrel soon.

Dim. Oh, fy! no! they won't quarrel yet a while. A quarrel in three weeks after marriage, would be somewhat of the quickest. By-and-by we shall hear of their whims and their humours. Well, but if you don't like Mr. Lovelace, what say you to Mr. Woodley?

Nancy. Ah! I don't know what to say.

Enter WOODLEY.

Wood. My sweetest angel! I have heard all, and my heart overflows with love and gratitude.

Nancy. Ah! but I did not know you was listening. You should not have betrayed me so, Dimity: I shall be angry with you.

Dim. Well, I'll take my chance for that. Run both into my room, and say all your pretty things to one another there, for here comes the old gentleman: make haste away.

[*Exeunt* Woodley and Nancy.]

Enter DRUGGET.

Drug. A forward presuming coxcomb! Dimity, do you step to Mrs. Drugget, and send her hither.

Dim. Yes, sir. It works upon him, I see. [*Exit.*]

Drug. The yew-trees ought not to be cut, because they'll help to keep off the dust, and I am too near the road already; a sorry ignorant fop! When I am in so fine a situation, and can see every carriage that goes by. And then to abuse the nursery-man's rarities! A finer sucking pig in lavender, with sage growing in his belly, was never seen! And yet he wants me not to have it. But have it I will. There's a fine tree of knowledge, too, with Adam and Eve in juniper; Eve's nose is not quite grown, but it is thought in the spring will be very forward. I'll have that too, with the serpent in ground ivy. Two poets in wormwood,—I'll have them both. Ay; and there's a lord mayor's feast in honey suckle; and the whole court of aldermen in horn-beam: they all shall be in my garden, with the dragon of Wantley, in box—all—all. I'll have 'em all, let my wife and Mr. Lovelace say what they will.

Enter MRS. DRUGGET.

Mrs. D. Did you send for me, lovey?

Drug. The yew-trees shall be cut into the giants of Guildhall, whether you will or not.

Mrs. D. Sure my own dear will do as he pleases.

Drug. And the pond, though you praise the green banks, shall be walled round, and I'll have a little fat boy in marble, spouting up water in the middle.

Mrs. D. My sweet, who hinders you?

Drug. Yes, and I'll buy the nursery-man's whole catalogue. Do you think, after retiring to live all the way here, almost four miles from London, that I won't do as I please in my own garden?

Mrs. D. My dear, but why are you in such a passion?

Drug. I'll have the lavender pig, and the Adam and Eve, and the Dragon of Wantley, and all of 'em; and there shan't be a more romantic spot on the London road than mine.

Mrs. D. I'm sure it's as pretty as hands can make it.

Drug. I did it all myself, and I'll do more. And Mr. Lovelace shan't have my daughter.

Mrs. D. No! what's the matter now, Mr. Drugget?

Drug. He shall learn better manners than to abuse my house and gardens. You put him in the head of it, but I'll disappoint you both. And so you may go and tell Mr. Lovelace that the match is quite off.

Mrs. D. I can't comprehend all this, not I; but I'll tell him so, if you please, my dear. I am willing to give myself pain, if it will give you pleasure: must I give myself pain? Don't ask me, pray don't; I don't like pain.

Drug. I am resolv'd, and it shall be so.

Mrs. D. Let it be so then. (*Cries.*) Oh! oh! cruel man! I shall break my heart if the match is broke off; if it is not concluded to-morrow, send for an undertaker, and bury me the next day.

Drug. How! I don't want that neither.

Mrs. D. Oh! oh!—

Drug. I am your lord and master, my dear, but not your executioner. Before George, it must never be said that my wife died of too much compliance. Cheer up, my love; and this affair shall be settled as soon as Sir Charles and Lady Racket arrive.

Mrs. D. You bring me to life again. You know, my sweet, what a happy couple Sir Charles and his lady are. Why should not we make our Nancy as happy?

Enter DIMITY.

Dim. Sir Charles and his lady, ma'am.

Mrs. D. Oh! charming! I'm transported with joy: Where are they; I long to see 'em? [*Exit.*]

Dim. Well, sir; the happy couple are arriv'd.

Drug. Yes, they do live happy indeed.

Dim. But how long will it last?

Drug. How long? don't forbode any ill, you jade! don't I say; it will last during their lives, I hope.

Dim. Well, mark the end of it; Sir Charles, I know, is gay and good humour'd; but he can't bear the least contradiction, no, not in the merest trifle.

Drug. Hold your tongue; hold your tongue.

Dim. Yes, sir, I have done: and yet there is in the composition of Sir Charles a certain humour, which, like the flying gout, gives no disturbance to the family till it settles in the head. When once it fixes there, mercy on every body about him! but here he comes! [*Exit.*]

Enter SIR CHARLES.

Sir Cha. My dear sir, I kiss your hand; but why stand on ceremony? To find you up thus late, mortifies me beyond expression.

Drug. 'Tis but once in a way, Sir Charles.

Sir Cha. My obligations to you are inexpressible; you have given me the most amiable of girls; our tempers accord like unisons in music.

Drug. Ah! that's what makes me happy in my old days; my children and my garden are all my care.

Sir Cha. And my friend Lovelace—he is to have our sister Nancy, I find.

Drug. Why, my wife is so minded.

Sir Cha. Oh! by all means, let her be made happy; a very pretty fellow, Lovelace. And as to that Mr.—Woodley, I think you call him, he is but a plain, underbred, ill-fashioned sort of a—nobody knows him!—he is not one of us. Oh, by all means marry her to one of us.

Drug. I believe it must be so. Would you take any refreshment?

Sir Cha. Nothing in nature,—it is time to retire.

Drug. Well, well, good night then, Sir Charles. Ha! here comes my daughter. Good night, Sir Charles.

Sir Cha. Bon repos.

Drug. (*Going out.*) My Lady Racket, I'm glad to hear how happy you are; I won't detain you now; there's your good man waiting for you. Good night, my girl. [*Exit.*]

Sir Cha. I must humour this old put, in order to be remember'd in his will.

Enter LADY RACKET.

Lady R. O la! I'm quite fatigu'd; I can hardly move; why don't you help me, you barbarous man?

Sir Cha. There; take my arm—"Was ever thing so pretty made to walk?"

Lady R. But I won't be laugh'd at; I don't love you.

Sir Cha. Don't you?

Lady R. No; dear me! this glove! why don't you help me off with my glove? Psha! you awkward thing, let it alone; you an't fit to be about me; I might as well not be married, for any use you are of; reach me a chair, you have no compassion for me. I am so glad to sit down. Why do you drag me to routs? You know I hate them.

Sir Cha. Oh! there's no existing, no breathing, unless one does as other people of fashion do.

Lady R. But I'm out of humour; I lost all my money.

Sir Cha. How much?

Lady R. Three hundred.

Sir Cha. Never fret for that; I don't value three hundred pounds to contribute to your happiness.

Lady R. Don't you? not value three hundred pounds to pleasure me?

Sir Cha. You know I don't.

Lady R. Ah! you fond fool; but I hate gaming; it almost metamorphoses a woman into a fury. Do you know that I was frightened at myself several times to-night; I had a huge oath at the very tip of my tongue.

Sir Cha. Had ye?

Lady R. I caught myself at it, and so I bit my lips; and then I was cram'd up in a corner of the room with such a strange party at a whist table, looking at black and red spots; did you mind them?

Sir Cha. You know I was busy elsewhere.

Lady R. There was that strange unaccountable woman, Mrs. Nightshade; she behaved so strangely to her husband, a poor, inoffensive, good-natur'd, good sort of a good for nothing man; but she so teaz'd him,—“How could you play that card? Ah, you've a head, and so has a pin. You're a numscull, you know you are. Ma'am, he has the poorest head in the world, he does not know what he is about, you know you don't. Ah fy! I'm asham'd of you!”

Sir Cha. She has serv'd to divert you, I see.

Lady R. And then, to crown all, there was my Lady Clackit, who runs on with an eternal volubility of nothing, out of all season, time, and place. In the very midst of the game, she begins—"Lard, ma'am, I was apprehensive I should not be able

to wait on your la'ship, my poor little dog, Pompey, the sweetest thing in the world—a spade led, there's the knave;—I was fetching a walk, me'm, the other morning in the Park, a fine frosty morning it was, I love frosty weather of all things—let me look at the last trick;—and so, me'm, little Pompey—and if your la'ship was to see the dear creature pinch'd with the frost, and mincing his steps along the Mall, with his pretty little innocent face—I vow I don't know what to play; and so me'm, while I was talking to Captain Flimsey—your la'ship knows Captain Flimsey—nothing but rubbish in my hand—I can't help it; and so, me'm, five odious frights of dogs beset my poor little Pompey; the dear creature has the heart of a lion, but, but who can resist five at once? And so Pompey barked for assistance; the hurt he received was upon his chest; the doctor would not advise him to venture out till the wound was heal'd, for fear of an inflammation. Pray what's trumps?"

Sir Cha. My dear, you'd make a most excellent actress.

Lady R. Well, now, let's go to rest;—but, Sir Charles, how shockingly you play'd that last rubber, when I stood looking over you.

Sir Cha. My love, I play'd the truth of the game.

Lady R. No, indeed, my dear, you play'd it wrong.

Sir Cha. Pho! nonsense! you don't understand it.

Lady R. I beg your pardon, I'm allowed to play better than you.

Sir Cha. All conceit, my dear, I was perfectly right.

Lady R. No such thing, Sir Charles, the diamond was the play.

Sir Cha. Pho! pho! ridiculous! the club was the card against the world. [*mond.*]

Lady R. Oh! no, no, no, I say it was the diamond.

Sir Cha. Zounds! madam, I say it was the club.

Lady R. What do you fly into such a passion for?

Sir Cha. 'Sdeath and fury, do you think I don't know what I'm about? I tell you once more, the club was the judgment of it.

Lady R. May be so; have it your own way. (*Walks about and sings.*)

Sir Cha. Vexation! you're the strangest woman that ever liv'd; there's no conversing with you. Look'ye here, my Lady Racket; it's the clearest case in the world, I'll make it plain in a moment.

Lady R. Well, sir! ha, ha, ha! (*With a sneering laugh.*)

Sir Cha. I had four cards left, a trump was led, they were six; no, no, no, they were seven, and we nine; then you know, the beauty of the play was to—

Lady R. Well, now it's amazing to me that you can't see it; give me leave, Sir Charles: your left hand adversary had led his last trump, and he had before finess'd the club, and rough'd the diamond; now if you had put on your diamond—

Sir Cha. Zounds! madam, but we play'd for the odd trick.

Lady R. And sure the play for the odd trick—

Sir Cha. Death and fury! can't you hear me?

Lady R. Go on, sir.

Sir Cha. Zounds! hear me, I say. Will you hear me?

Lady R. I never heard the like in my life. (*Hums a tune, and walks about fretfully.*)

Sir Cha. Why then you are enough to provoke the patience of a Stoick. (*Looks at her, and she walks about and laughs uneasy.*) Very well, madam; you know no more of the game than your father's leaden Hercules on the top of the house. You know no more of whist, than he does of gardening.

Lady R. Ha, ha, ha! (*Takes out a glass, and settles her hair.*)

Sir Cha. You're a vile woman, and I'll not sleep another night under the same roof with you.

Lady R. As you please, sir.

Sir Cha. Madam, it shall be as I please. I'll order my chariot this moment. (*Going.*) I know how the cards should be play'd as well as any man in England, that let me tell you. (*Going.*) And when your family were standing behind counters, measuring out tape, and bartering for Whitechapel needles, my ancestors, madam, my ancestors, were squandering away whole estates at cards; whole estates, my Lady Racket. (*She hums a tune, and he looks at her.*) Why then, by all that's dear to me, I'll never exchange another word with you, good, bad, or indifferent. Look'ye, my Lady Racket, thus it stood, the trump being led, it was then my business—

Lady R. To play the diamond, to be sure.

Sir Cha. D—n it; I have done with you for ever, and so you may tell your father. [*Exit.*]

Lady R. What a passion the gentleman's in! Ha, ha, ha! (*Laughs in a peevish manner.*) I promise him, I'll not give up my judgment.

Re-enter SIR CHARLES.

Sir Cha. My Lady Racket, look'ye, ma'am; once more, out of pure good nature—

Lady R. Sir, I am convinced of your good nature.

Sir Cha. That, and that only prevails with me to tell you, the club was the play.

Lady R. Well, be it so; I have no objection.

Sir Cha. It's the clearest point in the world; we were nine, and—

Lady R. And for that for very reason, you know the club was the best in the house.

Sir Cha. There is no such thing as talking to you. You're a base woman. I'll part from you for ever; you may live here with your father, and admire his fantastical evergreens, till you grow as fantastical yourself. I'll set out for London this instant. (*Stops at the door.*) The club was not the best in the house.

Lady R. How calm you are! Well!—I'll go to bed; will you come? You had better,—come then; you shall come to bed. Not come to bed, when I ask you! Poor Sir Charles! [*Looks and laughs, then exit.*]

Sir Cha. That ease is provoking. I tell you the diamond was not the play, and here I take my final leave of you. (*Walks back as fast as he can.*) I am resolv'd upon it, and I know the club was not the best in the house. [*Exit.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—A Room.

Enter DIMITY.

Dim. Ha, ha, ha! Oh! heavens! I shall expire in a fit of laughing; this is the modish couple that were so happy—such a quarrel as they have had, the whole house is in an uproar, ha, ha! a rare proof of the happiness they enjoy in high life. I shall never hear people of fashion mentioned again, but I shall be ready to die in a fit of laughter; ho! ho! ho! this is THREE WEEKS AFTER MARRIAGE, I think.

Enter DRUGGET.

Drug. Hey! how! What's the matter, Dimity? What am I call'd down stairs for?

Dim. Why, there's two people of fashion—(*Stifles a laugh.*)

Drug. Why, you saucy minx! Explain this moment.

Dim. The fond couple have been together by the cars this half hour. Are you satisfied now?

Drug. Ay! What, have they quarrell'd? What was it about?

Dim. Something above my comprehension, and

yours too, I believe; people in high life understand their own forms best. And here comes one that can unriddle the whole affair. [*Exit.*]

Enter SIR CHARLES.

Sir Cha. (*To the people within.*) I say let the horses be put to this moment. So, Mr. Drugget.

Drug. Sir Charles, here's a terrible bustle. I did not expect this. What can be the matter?

Sir Cha. I have been used by your daughter in so base, so contemptuous a manner, that I am determined not to stay in this house to-night.

Drug. This is a thunder-bolt to me! after seeing how elegantly and fashionably you lived together, to find now all sunshine vanished. Do, Sir Charles, let me heal this breach, if possible.

Sir Cha. Sir, 'tis impossible. I'll not live with her a day longer.

Drug. Nay, nay, don't be over hasty, let me in—treat you—go to bed and sleep upon it,—in the morning when you're cool—

Sir Cha. Oh, sir, I am very cool, I assure you, ha, ha!—it is not in her power, sir, to—a—a—to disturb the serenity of my temper. Don't imagine that I'm in a passion;—I'm not so easily ruffled as you may imagine. But quietly and deliberately I can repay the injuries done me by a false, ungrateful, deceitful wife.

Drug. The injuries done you by a false, ungrateful wife! Not my daughter, I hope?

Sir Cha. Her character is now fully known to me;—she's a vile woman, that's all I have to say, sir.

Drug. Hey! how!—A vile woman! What has she done?—I hope she is not capable—

Sir Cha. I shall enter into no detail, Mr. Drugget; the time and circumstances won't allow it at present. But depend upon it, I have done with her;—a low, unpolish'd, uneducated, false, imposing—See if the horses are put to. (*Calling off.*)

Drug. Mercy on me! in my old days to hear this.

Enter MRS. DRUGGET.

Mrs. D. Deliver me! I am all over in such a tremble. Sir Charles, I shall break my heart if there's anything amiss.

Sir Cha. Madam, I am very sorry, for your sake; but there is no possibility of living with her.

Mrs. D. My poor dear girl! What can she have done!

Sir Cha. What all her sex can do; the very spirit of them all.

Drug. Ay, ay, ay!—She's bringing foul disgrace upon us. This comes of her marrying a man of fashion!

Sir Cha. Fashion, sir!—that should have instructed her better; she might have been sensible of her happiness. Whatever you may think of the fortune you gave her, my rank commands respect, claims obedience, attention, truth, and love, from one raised in the world, as she has been by an alliance with me.

Drug. And let me tell you, however you may estimate your quality, my daughter is dear to me.

Sir Cha. And, sir, my character is dear to me.

Drug. Yet you must give me leave to tell you—

Sir Cha. I won't hear a word.

Drug. Not in behalf of my own daughter?

Sir Cha. No, no, no!

Drug. But, sir, I have a right to ask—

Mrs. D. Patience, my dear, be a little calm.

Drug. Mrs. Drugget, do you have patience;—I must and will inquire.

Mrs. D. Don't be so hasty, my love; have some respect for Sir Charles's rank; don't be violent with a man of his fashion.

Drug. Hold your tongue, woman, I say,—you're not a person of fashion at least. My daughter was ever a good girl.

Sir Cha. I have found her out.

Drug. Oh! then it is all over—and it does not signify arguing about it.

Mrs. D. That ever I should live to see this hour! How the unfortunate girl could take such wickedness in her head, I can't imagine; I'll go and speak to the unhappy creature this moment.

[Exit.]

Sir Cha. She stands detected now—detected in her truest colours.

Drug. Well, grievous as it may be, let me hear the circumstances of this unhappy business.

Sir Cha. Mr. Drugget, I have not leisure now; but her behaviour has been so exasperating, that I shall make the best of my way to town. My mind is fixed; she sees me no more, and so, your servant, sir.

[Exit.]

Drug. What a calamity has here befallen us! a good girl, and so well dispos'd, till the evil communication of high life, and fashionable vices, turned her to folly.

Enter LOVELACE.

Love. Joy! joy! Mr. Drugget, I give you joy.

Drug. Don't insult me, sir! I desire you won't.

Love. Insult you, sir! Is there any thing insulting, my dear sir, if I take the liberty to congratulate you on—

Drug. There! there!—the manners of high life for you, he thinks there's nothing in all this; the ill-behaviour of a wife he thinks an ornament to her character. Mr. Lovelace, you shall have no daughter of mine.

Love. My dear sir, never bear malice. I have reconsidered the thing, and curse catch me, if I don't think your notion of the Guildhall giants, and the court of aldermen in hornbeam—

Drug. Well, well, well, there may be people at the court end of the town in hornbeam too.

Love. Yes, faith, so there may, and I believe I could recommend you to a tolerable collection;—however, with your daughter I am ready to venture—

Drug. But I am not ready—I'll not venture my girl with you; no more daughters of mine shall have their minds deprav'd by polite vices.

Enter WOODLEY.

Mr. Woodley, you shall have Nancy to your wife, as I promis'd you; take her to-morrow morning.

Wood. Sir, I have not words to express—

Love. What the devil is the matter with the old haberdasher now?

Drug. And hark ye, Mr. Woodley, I'll make you a present for your garden, of a coronation dinner in greens, with the champion riding on horseback, and the sword will be full grown before April next.

Wood. I shall receive it, sir, as your favour.

Drug. Ay, ay, I see my error in wanting an alliance with great folks. I had rather have you, Mr. Woodley, for my son-in-law, than any courtly fop of 'em all. Is this man gone?—Is Sir Charles gone?

Wood. Not yet; he makes a bawling yonder for his horses. I'll step and call him to you.

[Exit.]

Drug. I am out of all patience. I am out of my senses. I must see him once more. Mr. Lovelace, neither you nor any person of fashion shall ruin another daughter of mine.

[Exit.]

Love. Droll this!—d—d droll; and every syllable of it Arabic to me; the queer old put is as whimsical in his notions of life as of gardening. If this be the case, I'll brush, and leave him to his exotics.

[Exit.]

Enter Lady RACKET, MRS. DRUGGET, and DIMITY.

Lady R. A cruel, barbarous man! to quarrel in this unaccountable manner; to alarm the whole house, and expose me and himself too.

Mrs. D. Oh! child, I never thought it would have come to this: your shame won't end here! it will be all over St. James's parish before to-morrow morning.

Lady R. Well, if it must be so, there's one comfort, the story will tell more to his disgrace than mine.

Dim. As I'm a sinner, and so it will, madam. He deserves what he has met with, I think.

Mrs. D. Dimity, don't you encourage her; you shock me to hear you speak so—I did not think you had been so harden'd.

Lady R. Harden'd do you call it? I have lived in the world to very little purpose, if such trifles as these are to disturb my rest.

Mrs. D. You wicked girl! Do you call it a trifle to be guilty of falsehood to your husband?

Lady R. How! (*Turns short and stares at her.*) Well, I protest and vow I don't comprehend all this! Has Sir Charles accused me of any impropriety in my conduct!

Mrs. D. Oh! too true, he has; he has found you out, and you have behaved basely, he says.

Lady R. Madam!

Mrs. D. You have fallen into frailty, like many others of your sex, he says; and he is resolved to come to a separation directly.

Lady R. Why, then, if he is so base a wretch as to dishonour me in that manner, his heart shall ache before I live with him again.

Dim. Hold to that, ma'am, and let his head ache into the bargain.

Lady R. Then let your doors be opened for him this very moment. Let him return to London; if he does not, I'll lock myself up, and the false one sha'n't approach me, though he beg on his knees at my very door! a base, injurious man!

[Exit.]

Mrs. D. Dimity, do follow, and hear what she has to say for herself.

Dim. She has excuse enough, I warrant her. What a noise is here indeed! I have lived in polite families, where there was no such bustle made about nothing.

[Exit.]

Enter SIR CHARLES and DRUGGET.

Sir Cha. 'Tis in vain, sir; my resolution is taken.

Drug. Well, but consider, I am her father; indulge me only till we hear what the girl has to say in her defence.

Sir Cha. She can have nothing to say; no excuse can palliate such behaviour.

Drug. Don't be too positive; there may be some mistake.

Sir Cha. No mistake: did I not see her, hear her myself?

Drug. Lackaday! then I am an unfortunate man!

Sir Cha. She will be unfortunate too; with all my heart—she may thank herself: she might have been happy, had she been so disposed.

Drug. Why, truly, I think she might.

Mrs. D. I wish you'd moderate your anger a little, and let us talk over this affair with temper: my daughter denies every tittle of your charge.

Sir Cha. Denies it! denies it!

Mrs. D. She does, indeed.

Sir Cha. And that aggravates her fault.

Mrs. D. She vows you never found her out in any thing that was wrong.

Sir Cha. So! she does not allow it to be wrong then? Ma'am, I tell you again, I know her thoroughly; I say, I have found her out, and I am now acquainted with her character.

Mrs. D. Then you are in opposite stories: she swears, my dear Mr. Drugget, the poor girl swears she never was guilty of the smallest infidelity to her husband in her born days.

Sir Cha. And what then? what if she does say so?

Mrs. D. And if she says truly, it is hard her character should be blown upon without just cause.

Sir Cha. And is she therefore to behave ill in other respects? I never charged her with infidelity to me, madam; there I allow her innocent.

Drug. And did you not charge her then?

Sir Cha. No, sir; I never dreamt of such a thing.

Drug. Why then, if she's innocent, let me tell you, you are a scandalous person.

Mrs. D. Pr'ythee, my dear—

Drug. Be quiet. Though he is a man of quality, I will tell him of it. Did I not fine for sheriff?—Yes, you are a scandalous person, to defame an honest man's daughter. [now?

Sir Cha. What have you taken into your head

Drug. You charg'd her with falsehood to your bed.

Sir Cha. No: never, never.

Drug. But I say you did: you called yourself a cuckold—did not he, wife?

Mrs. D. Yes, lovey, I'm witness.

Sir Cha. Absurd! I said no such thing.

Drug. But I aver you did.

Mrs. D. You did indeed, sir.

Sir Cha. But I tell you, no; positively, no.

Drug. and Mrs. Drug. And I say yes; positively,

Sir Cha. 'Sdeath! this is all madness. [yes.

Drug. You said she followed the ways of most of her sex.

Sir Cha. I said so, and what then?

Drug. There, he owns it! owns that he called himself a cuckold; and without rhyme or reason into the bargain.

Sir Cha. I never own'd any such thing.

Drug. You own'd it even now—now—now.

Enter DIMITY, in a fit of laughing.

Dim. What do you think it was all about?—ha, ha! the whole secret is come out, ha, ha! It was all about a game of cards—ha, ha!

Drug. A game of cards!

Dim. (Laughing.) It was all about a club and a diamond. (Runs out laughing.)

Drug. And was that all, Sir Charles?

Sir Cha. And enough too, sir.

Drug. And was that what you found her out in?

Sir Cha. I can't bear to be contradicted when I'm clear that I'm in the right.

Drug. I never heard such a heap of nonsense in all my life. Why does he not go and beg her pardon, then?

Sir Cha. I beg her pardon! I won't debase myself to any of you: I shan't forgive her, you may rest assured. [Exit.

Drug. Now there—there's a pretty fellow for you!

Mrs. D. I'll step and prevail on my lady Racket to speak to him, then all will be well. [Exit.

Drug. A ridiculous fop! I'm glad it's no worse, however.

Enter NANCY.

So, Nancy; you seem in confusion, my girl.

Nancy. How can one help it, with all this noise in the house? and you're going to marry me as ill as my sister. I hate Mr. Lovelace.

Drug. Why so, child?

Nancy. I know these people of quality despise us all out of pride, and would be glad to marry us out of avarice.

Drug. The girl's right.

Nancy. They marry one woman, live with another, and love only themselves.

Drug. And then quarrel about a card.

Nancy. I don't want to be a gay lady; I want to be happy.

Drug. And so you shall; don't fright yourself, child; step to your sister; bid her make herself easy; go, and comfort her—go.

Nancy. Yes, sir. [Exit.

Drug. I'll step and settle the matter with Mr. Woodley this moment. [Exit.

SCENE II.—A Room.

SIR CHARLES discovered seated at a table, with a pack of cards in his hand.

Sir Cha. Never was any thing like her behaviour. I can pick out the very cards I had in my hand, and then 'tis as plain as the sun—there now, there; no, d—n it!—no—there it was—now let's see—they had four by honours, and we play'd for the odd trick—d—nation! honours were divided; ay, honours were divided, and then a trump was led, and the other side had the—confusion! this preposterous woman has put it all out of my head. (Puts the cards into his pocket.)—Mighty well, madam! I have done with you.

Enter MRS. DRUGGET.

Mrs. D. Come, Sir Charles, let me prevail.—Come with me, and speak to her.

Sir Cha. I don't desire to see her face.

Mrs. D. If you were to see her all bathed in tears, I am sure it would melt your very heart.

Sir Cha. Madam, it shall be my fault if ever I am treated so again; I'll have nothing to say to her. (Going,—stops.) Does she give up the point?

Mrs. D. She does; she agrees to anything.

Sir Cha. Does she allow that the club was the play?

Mrs. D. Just as you please; she's all submission.

Sir Cha. Does she own that the club was not the best in the house?

Mrs. D. She does—she does.

Sir Cha. Then I'll step and speak to her: I never was clearer in any thing in my life. [Exit.

Mrs. D. Lord love 'em! they'll make it up now, and then they'll be as happy as ever. [Exit.

Enter DRUGGET and DIMITY.

Drug. So! Any news from above stairs? Is this absurd quarrel at an end? Have they made it up?

Dim. Oh, a mere bagatelle, sir! These little fracas among the better sort of people never last long: elegant trifles cause elegant disputes, and they come together elegantly again, as you see—for here they come, in perfect good humour.

[Exit.

Enter SIR CHARLES, LADY RACKET, and MRS. DRUGGET.

Sir Cha. Mr. Drugget, I embrace you: Sir, you see me now in the most perfect harmony of spirits.

Drug. What, all reconcil'd again?

Lady R. All made up sir; I knew how to bring him to my lure. This is the first difference, I think, we ever had, Sir Charles.

Sir Cha. And I'll be sworn it shall be the last.

Drug. I am happy at last. Sir Charles, I can spare you an image to put on the top of your house in London.

Sir Cha. Infinitely obliged to you.

Drug. Well—well; it's time to retire now: I am glad to see you reconcil'd, and now I'll wish you a good night, Sir Charles. Fare ye well both; I am glad your quarrels are at an end.—This way. [Exeunt Mrs. D. and Drugget.

Lady R. Ah! you are a sad man, Sir Charles, to behave to me as you have done.

Sir Cha. My dear, I grant it; and such an absurd quarrel too—ha, ha!

Lady R. Yes—ha, ha!—about such a trifle!

Sir Cha. It's pleasant how we could both fall into such an error—ha, ha!

Lady R. Ridiculous beyond expression—ha, ha!

Sir Cha. And then the mistake your father and mother fell into—ha, ha!

Lady R. That, too, is a diverting part of the story—ha, ha! But, Sir Charles, must I stay and

live with my father till I "grow as fantastical as his own ever-greens?"

Sir Cha. No, no; pr'ythee don't remind me of my folly.

Lady R. Ah! "my relations were all standing behind counters, selling Whitechapel needles, while your family were spending great estates."

Sir Cha. Nay, nay, spare my blushes.

Lady R. How could you say so harsh a thing? I don't love you.

Sir Cha. It was indelicate, I grant it.

Lady R. Am I a "vile woman?"

Sir Cha. How can you, my angel—

Lady R. I sha'n't forgive you; I'll have you on your knees for this. (*Sings, and plays with him.*)

"Go, naughty man."—Ah! Sir Charles!

Sir Cha. The rest of my life shall aim at convincing you how sincerely I love—

Lady R. (*Sings.*) "Go, naughty man, I can't abide you." Well; come, let us go to rest.—(*Going.*) Ah! Sir Charles, now it is all over, the diamond was the play.

Sir Cha. Oh! no, no, no, my dear—ha, ha, ha! it was the club, indeed.

Lady R. Indeed, my love, you're mistaken.

Sir Cha. No! no, no, no!

Lady R. But, I say, yes, yes, yes! (*Both laughing.*)

Sir Cha. Psha! no such thing—ha, ha!

Lady R. 'Tis so, indeed—ha, ha!

Sir Cha. No, no, no—you'll make me die with laughing.

Lady R. Ay, and you make me laugh too—ha, ha! (*Toying with him.*)

Enter Footman.

Foot. Your honour's cap and slippers.

Sir Cha. Ay, lay down my night-cap—and here, take these shoes off. (*He takes them off, and leaves them at a distance.*) Indeed, my Lady Racket, you make me ready to expire with laughing—ha, ha!

Lady R. You may laugh, but I'm right, notwithstanding.

Sir Cha. How can you say so?

Lady R. How can you say otherwise?

Sir Cha. Well; now mind me, my lady Racket: we can now talk of this matter in good humour; we can discuss it coolly.

Lady R. So we can; and it's for that reason I venture to speak to you: are these the ruffles I bought for you?

Sir Cha. They are, my dear.

Lady R. They are very pretty;—but indeed you played the card wrong.

Sir Cha. How can you talk so? (*Somewhat peevish.*)

Lady R. See there, now!

Sir Cha. Listen to me; this was the affair—

Lady R. Psha! fiddlestick! hear me first.

Sir Cha. Pho!—no—d—n it, let me speak!

Lady R. Very well, sir! fly out again!

Sir Cha. Look here, now;—here's a pack of cards;—now you shall be convinced.

Lady R. You may talk till to-morrow!—I know I'm right! (*Walks about.*)

Sir Cha. Why, then, by all that's perverse, you are the most headstrong—Can't you look here now? here are the very cards.

Lady R. Go on; you'll find it out at last.

Sir Cha. D—n it! will you let a man shew you? Pho! it's all nonsense! I'll talk no more about it! (*Puts up the cards.*) Come, we'll go to bed. (*Going.*)

Now, only stay a moment! (*Takes out the cards.*) Now, mind me; see here—

Lady R. No, it does not signify; your head will be clearer in the morning; I'll go to bed.

Sir Cha. Stay a moment, can't ye?

Lady R. No; my head begins to ache. (*Affectedly.*)

Sir Cha. Why then, d—n the cards! there!—there! (*Throwing the cards about.*) And there, and there! You may go to bed by yourself; and, confusion seize me, if I live a moment longer with you!—(*Putting his shoes on again.*) No, never, madam!

Lady R. Take your own way, sir.

Sir Cha. Now, then, I tell you once more, you are a vile woman. Will you sit down quietly, and let me convince you? (*Sits.*)

Lady R. I'm disposed to walk about, sir.

Sir Cha. Why then, may I perish, if ever—a blockhead!—an idiot I was to marry! (*Walks about.*) such a provoking—impertinent—(*She sits down.*)—D—u!—I am so clear in the thing—she is not worth my notice—(*Sits down, turns his back, and looks uneasy.*)—I'll take no more pains about it. (*Pauses for some time, then looks at her.*) Is it not very strange that you won't hear me?

Lady R. Sir, I am very ready to hear you.

Sir Cha. Very well, then; very well, my dear; you remember how the game stood?

Lady R. I wish you'd untie my necklace, it hurts me.

Sir Cha. Why can't you listen?

Lady R. I tell you it hurts me terribly.

Sir Cha. Why, then, you may be as wrong as you please, for I'll be curs'd if I ever endeavour to set you right again. [*Exit.*]

Enter MR. and MRS. DRUGGET, WOODLEY, and NANCY.

Drug. What's here to do now?

Lady R. Never was such a man born. I did not say a word to the gentleman, and yet he has been raving about the room like a madman.

Drug. And about a club again, I suppose. Come hither, Nancy: Mr. Woodley, she is your's for life.

Mrs. D. My dear, how can you be so—

Drug. It shall be so; take her for life, Mr. Woodley.

Wood. My whole life shall be devoted to her happiness.

Lady R. Oh! this is only one of those polite disputes which people of quality, who have nothing else to differ about, must always be liable to.—This will all be made up.

Drug. Never tell me—it's too late now. Mr. Woodley, I recommend my girl to your care. I shall have nothing now to think of, but my greens, and my images, and my shrubbery: though, mercy on all married folks, say I! for these wranglings are, I am afraid, *What we must all come to.*

LADY RACKET, coming forward.

What we must all come to? What?—Come to what? Must broils and quarrels be the marriage lot?

If that's the wise, deep meaning of our poet, The man's a fool!—a blockhead! and I'll shew it.

What could induce him in an age so nice,

So fan'd for virtue, so refin'd from vice,

To form a plan so trivial, false and low?

As if a belle could quarrel with a beau.

Shun strife, ye fair, and, once a contest o'er,

Wake to a blaze the dying flame no more. [*Exeunt.*]



